



The Battery Commander's OPORD

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(TACSOP) facilitates conveying the critical information to subordinate leaders in a timely manner, telling them what will be covered and in what order. The doctrinal five-paragraph OPORD is the format for the battery OPORD.

Methods of Presenting the Battery OPORD. Time permitting, the battery commander issues the order to platoon leaders and has the platoon leaders conduct the platoon orders process and troop-leading procedures. This allows the battery commander to train his platoon leaders to be commanders.

If time is limited, the battery commander may need to brief the battery OPORD down to the section chief level. The technique the battery commander uses to present the information in the battery order depends on his personality, presentation style, and the level of understanding within the battery. There are three means by which the commander can convey the contents of his order: oral presentation, map/overlay presentation and the terrain model.

The oral presentation is commonly used when time is short. A standard format is critical for this method to be effective. Oral presentation limits the audience's ability to grasp the relevance and (or) time/distance involved in an operation.

The map/overlay presentation is the easiest to do, but only those few personnel who can see the map will understand the contents. The battery commander can use the battery operations center (BOC)/platoon operations center (POC) situation map to brief the order. He must ensure each attendee brings his copy of the map to the operations order.

Another map/overlay presentation technique is to have the BOC/POC reproduce overlays for all track commanders. This ensures everyone is on the same overlay and has the same graphics.

The final means to issue the OPORD is the terrain model presentation. This is the most effective means because it allows the audience to visualize the opera-

tion as the battery commander describes it. Section chiefs must bring their maps to annotate key terrain, routes, etc., during the presentation. One limitation of a terrain model presentation is that it takes time to construct even a simple terrain form that conveys the link of the terrain to the graphics and the operation.

One technique useful in inclement weather or at night is to use a drop-cloth model, drawing key terrain features on a canvas or standard integrated command post system (SICPS) floor. This technique expedites the construction of the terrain model.

The battery TACSOP designates who is responsible for constructing the terrain model and what the standard is for the construction. The option some batteries use of having various people construct the model does not ensure the quality of the model. The BOC/POC personnel are best qualified and resourced to construct the terrain model.

The battery standardizes the OPORD format in the battery TACSOP. Then the selected leaders who assemble to receive the order have a standardized, fill-in-the-blank, laminated order format and a map with graphics.

Briefing the Order. The standard OPORD has five paragraphs, which are the basis of the battery commander's operations order briefing. Figure 1 is an example of a battery OPORD for a movement-to-contact. The following information describes a way, not the only way, to conduct the battery operations process and is based on the standardized format in Figure 1.

The battery commander can anticipate resource requirements by using standardized essential FA tasks (EFATs) to initiate action on precombat checks (PCCs) without guidance from battalion. The battery commander's ability to anticipate can save the battery valuable time—one resource the battery never has enough of during combat.

1. Situation. The battery commander orients the audience using a map or terrain model; he points out the area of operations (AO) and the area of interest (AI) that affect the battery. The AO is defined by the brigade or division boundaries. The AI includes the AO and all areas outside the AO the enemy can use to influence the mission; this includes as far back as the enemy artillery can range friendly forces but can include farther back if the enemy is attacking.

Next, the battery commander briefs the light and weather data, explaining

Throughout the combat training centers (CTCs), Field Artillery battery commanders have demonstrated a weakness in executing the battery orders process. This weakness is most profound in their development and issuing of a battery operations order (OPORD).

There are several reasons for this weakness. First, the FA School at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, only now is beginning to teach the battery orders process in the FA Captains Career Course (FACCC). Second, units do not train the battery orders process as part of home-station training. The key to success in the battery orders process is standardization and home-station training.

This article addresses techniques for issuing the battery order and developing a standardized operations order, providing an example of a battery OPORD and execution matrix.

The biggest factor in the orders process is time. The time available determines the level of detail in the planning process, who attends the orders briefing and what rehearsals to conduct. A standardized order format in the battery tactical standing operating procedures

1. Situation:

a. Light and Weather Data/Effects.

High 77	Moonrise 2359	Sunrise 0611
Low 46	Moonset 1316	Sunset 1850
Wind Direction NW	NVG Window 2323/0550	BMNT 0516
Wind Speed 15 knots	% Illum 65	EENT 1745

b. Terrain (Effects on Friendly and Enemy Forces).

- Observation- *High ground provides excellent observation and fields of fire, maximizing direct fire weapon ranges.*
- Cover and Concealment- *Little vegetation, providing only individual concealment. The rocky broken terrain in the hills and mountains provide excellent cover from direct fire. On the valley floor, wadis provide the only cover. Difficult to conceal vehicle movements during daylight hours because of the dust trails.*
- Obstacles- *Hill masses, rock outcroppings and boulder fields, vic grids: NJ2394, NJ2592 and NJ2322.*
- Key Terrain- *East range road, Colorado Wadi, Iron Triangle, Hill 760, Hill 800, Hilltop (vic NK2617).*
- Avenues of Approach- *The central corridor consists mostly of open areas that allow for fast, easy movement for up to regimental-sized units.*

c. Enemy Forces (Focus on Strength and Composition). AGMB formation, 7-10 T-80s, 21-29 BMPs, 3 AT-5s (emphasize weapon system capabilities); RAG has 12 tubes of 2S1s, 2 Bns of 2S19s; DAG has 1 Bn of BM-21s, 2 Bns of 2S5s, 1 Bn of 2S7s. Enemy has chemical PK and NP. (Again, emphasize weapon and range capabilities; identify where the enemy likely will use chemical munitions to influence the battle.)

d. Friendly Forces (Battalion Mission and Concept of the Operation). Use the map to brief the brigade mission/ concept of the operation and FA battalion mission/concept of the operation.

2. Mission:

A/1-41 FA provides fires in support of 1 BCT movement-to-contact to PL Corsair 080600May97 to expand the division lodgment area to protect the northern flank.

3. Execution:

a. Concept of the Operation. Brief off the map or terrain model.

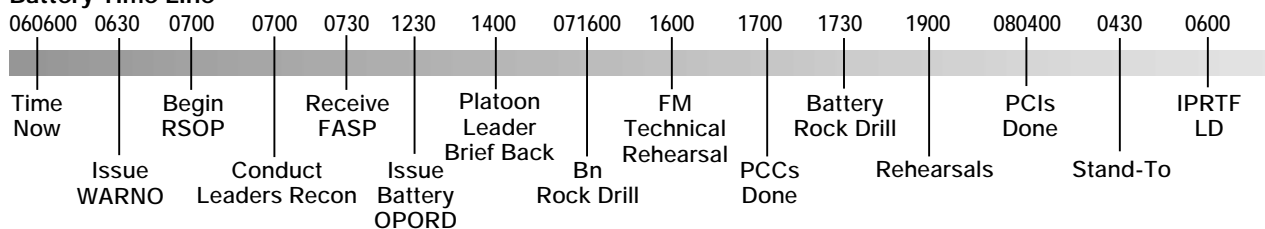
b. Execution. See the Execution Matrix.

c. Special Instructions.

PCCs (In Order By Priority)	PCIs (Conducted By)	Rehearsals
FASCAM Mass NBC CASEVAC POC Changeover	M2 Headspace and Timing Turret Loads Test M8 Alarms M256 Kits Straps and Litters Map Boards w/ Graphics	React to ground threat (defeat a single vehicle). Identify and navigate a breach in a minefield. Division Standard

PCCs/PCIs and Rehearsals based on EFATs and threat.

Battery Time Line



4. Service Support:

a. Turret Load. See Execution Matrix.

b. Resupply Trigger (Munition and # Rounds Fired). See the Execution Matrix.

5. Command and Control:

a. Succession of Command. 1 Platoon Ldr, 2 Platoon Ldr, 1 FDO, 2 FDO, 1SG

b. Frequency and Call Signs. IAW SOI and Battery TACSOP.

c. Challenge and Password. Day 1 in effect.

Legend:

AGMB = Advanced Guard Main Body
BCT = Brigade Combat Team
BMPs = Tracked Infantry Combat Vehicles
Bns = Battalions
BMNT = Beginning Morning Nautical Time
CASEVAC = Casualty Evacuation
DAG = Division Artillery Group
EENT = End Evening Nautical Time
EFATs = Essential FA Tasks

FASCAM = Family of Scatterable Mines
FASP = FA Support Plan
IPRTF = In Position Ready to Fire
LD = Line of Departure
NBC = Nuclear, Biological and Chemical
NP = Non-Persistent Chemical
NVG = Night Vision Goggles
OPORD = Operations Order
PCCs = Pre-Combat Checks
PCIs = Pre-Combat Inspections

PK = Persistent Chemical
PL = Phase Line
POC = Platoon Operations Center
RAG = Regimental Artillery Group
RSOP = Reconnaissance, Selection and Occupation of Position
SOI = Standing Operating Instructions
TACSOP = Tactical Standing Operating Procedures
vic = In the vicinity of...
WARNO = Warning Order

Figure 1: Example of a Battery Operations Order (OPORD) in a Movement-to-Contact

Phase/Trigger Event	Phase 1 2-1 Infiltration	Phase 2 R&S Plan	Phase 3 LD to Defeat AGMB	Phase 4 Defeat Main Body
Enemy Actions	Scouts out; TF Angel secures hidden valley in the south and areas north of Brown Pass.	Phase 1 fires to neutralize C ² ; PCHEM and FASCAM to shape battlefield.	CRP LD on contact report; Phase 2 fires +30 mins; FSE LD to fix LDTF and envelop and destroy TF; AGMB exploits success.	Main body exploits success; begins Phase 3 fires w/ Phase 4 fires in the close battle.
Threat to the Battery	Indirect Fires	Mounted/Dismounted Ground (Recon)	Counterfire Air	Counterfire Ground
Maneuver Forces	2-1 Scouts LD; 2-1 main body conducts truck infiltration; COLTs inserted.	2-1 denies enemy maneuver corridors; 3-7 recons south to LOA; 3-69 recons north to LOA.	3-7 leads; 3-69 follows, echelon left; 2-1 establishes blocking position.	3-7 destroys AGMB and fixes main body; 3-69 destroys main body.
Battery Location	NK361188 AOF 2100; occupy hides IPRTF 081100; RSOP alternate hides.		Follow 3-69, PA Steel AOF 2100; o/o to PZA2; LOA PL Warhawk; AOF 1800 Axis Steel.	o/o move to PZA3; LOA PL Ford, AOF 1600; o/o to PZA4, LOA PL Mustang; o/o to PZA5, LOA PL Corsair on Axis Steel.
EFAT/Purpose Target #/Ammo Scheme of Fires	Mass HE 6 Rds AE0002 to support 2-1 infiltration; o/o be prepared FASCAM AE0001 to delay; 1-10 FA primary shooter w/ A/1-41 FA alternate shooter.		Mass DPICM AE0051 3 Rds to suppress the FSE; AE0052 9 Rds countefire; AE0053 9 Rds main body.	Mass DPICM AE0055 10 Rds and AE0057 4 Rds to destroy main body.
Movement Trigger	Move out of hide positions 0881000.		Stay 1000m to rear of trail tank company (D Co).	
Order of March, Movement Technique/LOA	1, 2 Trains in platoon wedge; LOA PL Thunderbolt.		1A north, 2 A south, platoon wedge/column through passes.	1A stays in north sector; 2A stays in southern sector.
Survive Criteria	o/o upon receive counterfire.	3 Missions/30 Mins.	2 missions/10 Mins.	
ADA Status	Yellow/Tight			
NBC Level Decon Sites	MOPP 0 Decon NK 300158	MOPP 2; o/o Decon NK335201.		
LOGPAC/BRP	NK310159	AXP NK301401	BAS NK320134.	R ³ SP NK397132

Turret Load	HEF	HEM	HEA	HEB	HER	SMA	SMB	SMC	ILA	ADAM	RAAMS	CPH	GB	WB	119	203
Gun	20		7		5			5				2		16	20	5
FAASV	30		15		7			10	10	2	16	3		40	46	7
PLS	176													176		

Resupply Triggers (# of Rds and Type)– 8 Rds HEF resupply howtizer; 30 Rds HEF resupply FAASV from PLS; 9 119 powders resupply with WB.

Legend:		
ADA = Air Defense Artillery	FSE = Forward Security Element	o/o = On Order
ADAM = Area Denial Artillery Munition	GB = Green Bag	OBJ = Objective
AOF = Azimuth of Fire	HE = High-Explosive Munitions	PA = Position Area
AXP = Ammunition Exchange Point	HEA = HE Lot A	PCHEM = Persistent Chemical
BAS = Battalion Aid Station	HEB = HE Lot B	PZ = Paladin Zone
BRP = Battery Resupply Point	HEF = DPICM	RAAMS = Remote Anti-Armor Mine System
COLTs = Combat Observation Lasing Teams	HEM = Extended-Range DPICM	R&S = Reconnaissance and Surveillance
CPH = Copperhead	HER = HE RAP	R ³ SP = Rearm, Refuel and Resupply Survey Point
CRP = Countreconnaissance Patrol	ILA = Illumination	SMA = M110 White Phosphorous
C ² = Command and Control	LD = Line of Departure	SMB = HC 116A1
DPICM = Dual-Purpose Improved Conventional Munitions	LDTF = Lead Task Force	SMC = Smoke M825
EFAT = Essential FA Task	LOA = Limit of Advance	TF = Task Force
FAASV = Field Artillery Ammunition Resupply Vehicle	LOGPAC = Logistics and Personnel Administration Center	WB = White Bag
	MOPP = Mission-Oriented Protective Posture	

Figure 2: Battery Execution Matrix

its effect on friendly and enemy forces. He addresses the effects of night-vision goggle (NVG) window and illumination rounds on the operation.

Then the commander discusses the terrain, describing observation, cover and concealment, obstacles, key terrain, and avenues of approach (OCOKA). He emphasizes aspects most important to the section chiefs: soil content, slope of the valley walls, hilltops that affect the executive officer minimum quadrant elevation (QE), intervening crests, etc.

The battery commander explains the enemy situation as it relates to the current situation and the mission. He describes the threat to the battery, focusing on the enemy's composition and strength. He identifies weapon systems and capabilities and explains how they will be employed against the battery.

The commander uses the battery execution matrix to describe enemy actions by phase and the concept of the operation. The matrix is part of the OPORD, Paragraph 3b. Figure 2 on Page 22 gives an example matrix in the battery OPORD for a movement-to-contact.

When describing each phase, the battery commander applies the "So what?" factor. For example, in Phase 1 of Figure 2, the battery commander might say, "As we prepare for operations through the night, the primary threat to the battery will be mounted and dismounted recon patrols of two to six enemy soldiers in BRDMs [wheeled armored reconnaissance vehicles] gathering information/intelligence. When possible, the patrols will attack undefended positions—so, stay alert and be prepared for dismounted attacks."

2. Mission. The battery commander explains the maneuver brigade mission/commander's intent and the FA battalion mission/commander's intent to ensure all soldiers understand how they fit into the fight. The mission statement is who, what, when, where and why. The battery commander keeps the explanations in Paragraph 2 brief; the details are covered in Paragraph 3.

3. Execution. This paragraph covers the concept of the operation, which gives the battery commander's intent and describes how the battery is going to execute the mission. The commander uses the map or terrain model to explain how the battery will move and execute its EFATs.

The battery commander uses the execution matrix to summarize the battery order and brief the details of the operation by phase. The execution matrix covers all

areas essential to the battery's success.

Next are special instructions. The battery TACSOP should include PCCs based on EFATs and threats to the battery, at a minimum. The commander identifies the PCCs, precombat inspections (PCIs) and rehearsals the battery must conduct and in what priority for each mission. The battery TACSOP should include standardized PCCs (*FM 6-50 Tactics, Techniques and Procedures for the Cannon Battery* has several) and identifies PCIs inherent to those PCCs. PCCs are conducted at the section chief level. PCIs are conducted at the platoon leader/platoon sergeant level.

Rehearsals are conducted based on the time available and necessity. The battery rock drill rehearsal is critical. In this rehearsal, the battery commander verifies attendees (including track commanders) understand his intent and the concept of the operation. The battery commander asks questions and makes the battery rock drill an interactive exercise. He requires section chiefs and ammunition team chiefs backbrief him on portions of the OPORD. The commander uses the battery execution matrix format to conduct the battery rock drill. Other rehearsals include tasks the battery has to execute that are not standardized or are critical to the mission's success.

4. Service Support. The primary focus for combat service support at the battery level is on Class III Petroleum, Oil and Lubricants (POL); Class V Ammunition; and maintenance and medical support. Generally during a battle, Class III will not be a factor. The critical planning factor is Class V.

The battery commander determines the ammunition requirements for his battery, based on the EFATs and the scheme of fires. He must know the amount of ammunition available by type of projectile, propellant and fuze.

The platoon leaders must provide the battery commander accurate ammunition counts as part of the commander's mission analysis. The battery commander then develops plans for turret or high-mobility multipurpose wheeled vehicle (HMMWV) ammunition loads. Turret load refers to the number and type of rounds/propellants loaded in the self-propelled howitzer or in the prime mover for towed howitzers (HMMWV).

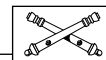
The battery commander develops the required turret loads based on the EFATs and by the section that must execute the individual EFATs. Turret loads can change with the phases of the operation.

The battery commander also establishes resupply triggers for the battery. Using battlefield calculus, the commander determines the number and type of ammunition required to accomplish each EFAT. He then determines triggers for the resupply from the FA ammunition support vehicle (FAASV) to the howitzer and from the palletized loading system (PLS) to the FAASV.

The resupply triggers need to be clear—"8 rounds of DPICM [dual-purpose improved conventional munitions]." This tells the howitzer section chief that when he fires eight rounds of DPICM, he needs to resupply his howitzer. The leadership must rehearse the EFATs to verify the battery will have enough ammunition at the critical times and places to execute the EFATs. The commander also addresses the maintenance recovery and casualty evacuation (CASEVAC) plans. He addresses them in the battery execution matrix.

5. Command and Control. This paragraph identifies the chain of command, the battery commander's location during the battle, the frequency and call signs addressed per signal operations instructions (SOI), coordination with adjacent maneuver units before execution to deconflict land resources, ammunition exchange points (AXPs) etc., and the challenge and password.

The key to success in issuing a battery OPORD is to use a standardized process that everyone understands. If the battery commander trains his unit on the OPORD's contents and that he will present the battery orders briefing in that sequence, he has a much better chance of his soldiers understanding the order. The commander then makes the most of his most limited resource: time.



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